



*Lederberg*

February 1, 1994

Joshua Lederberg, Ph.D.  
The Rockefeller University  
1230 York Avenue  
New York, NY 10021-6399

Dear Joshua:

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to respond to my letter. You certainly manage to keep active. I was particularly intrigued by your being asked to Chair a study for the Secretary of Defense on the health problems attributed by Veterans to their experience in the Gulf war. What interests me is the issue of how one establishes causality in the absence of controlled conditions. I'd love to hear about your findings at some later time.

Your comments stimulated considerable thought in me. I agree that a "great" athlete is not in the same universe as an Einstein, but wonder about your views of the different types of intelligence and whether, in some ways, athletic "genius" is just as remarkable as conceptual genius even though its benefits to mankind are less. I also found your comment on your sense of a "gift" and your obligation connected with it fascinating. Since I never possessed this sense myself, I would like to know a little more about what it means. Did you get this sense from your parents, teachers, peers? Was it based on your comparative performance in school? Was this gift like some virtuoso ability, and if so, in what spheres? And why should you feel an "obligation" with it. Were you taught that you had an obligation to go with your talent or do you feel you arrived at that conclusion yourself.

In a recent communication with Robert Root-Bernstein, who has access to the Eiduson data on the scientists, he indicated that most eminent scientists experienced a sense of dis-ease when they were unable to solve a problem and that the whole body would be affected by irresolution. Did you find, in your case, that once you started your research that it tended to dominate you until you brought it to some resolution? Also, do you believe there were any physical consequences to protracted problem-solving.

Joshua Lederberg, Ph.D.  
February 1, 1994  
Page 2

I am in no rush for your response, but I would look forward to your comments when you get a chance. Since you inform me that you don't mind "being on the couch," I've decided to take advantage of that. At some later point, I certainly would eagerly look forward to reading your autobiography. Do you plan on publishing it while you still can enjoy the reviews, or are you going to wait to do this posthumously?

My very best wishes for this coming year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Arnold".

Arnold M. Ludwig, M.D.

AML/skt